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**IRAQ – A PROPOSAL FOR A STRATEGY OF COMPELLENCE**

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## **IRAQ – A PROPOSAL FOR A STRATEGY OF COMPELLENCE**

Since the Carter Doctrine of the 1970s, US national interests in the Persian Gulf have been termed vital, (which means the US is willing to use force to protect them), due to concerns about oil supplies, regional stability, Israeli survival, and an Arab-Israeli settlement.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the US went to war in 1991 in response to Iraqi aggression in Kuwait. After defeat, Iraq accepted United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 687 as the ceasefire ending the Gulf War. Since then, the US has practiced a strategy of containment to forestall Iraqi aggression. The Clinton Administration's 1997 A National Security Strategy for a New Century stated the US "would like to see Iraq's reintegration into the international community [but] Iraq must comply with all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions [and] until that behavior changes, [the US] goal is **containing** [emphasis added] the threat Saddam Hussein poses to Iraq's neighbors, its people, the free flow of Gulf and broader US interests in the middle east."<sup>2</sup> This paper contends that the containment policy is failing, the stated political goals are not being met, and an analysis of the situation indicates the need for a strategy of compellence. The analysis answers a number of questions that address the means that are being used to meet the US political goals and how they are failing, what means are available to support a compellence strategy, and the ability of military force to meet the political goals if non-military means fail.

### **What is the difference between containment and compellence?**

Containment is a strategy "designed to prevent a clearly aggressive opponent from acting out his dangerous, mostly expansionist, impulses [and] is grounded in the expectation that eventually the opponent will be worn down to the point where he ... ceases to be an adversary that needs to be kept in check."<sup>3</sup> It is a passive strategy. Compellence, on the other hand, is active and anticipates the use of force in the event peaceful measures fail. It is the "deployment of military power so as to be able to either stop an adversary from doing something that he has

already undertaken or to get him to do something that he has not yet undertaken.”<sup>4</sup> Compellence, in addition to a military option, requires a deadline, and usually involves questions of “where, what, and how much.”<sup>5</sup> A compellence strategy may include both military and non-military (e.g., economic) aspects; with the military option being the last resort if non-military ones fail.

### **What are the US political goals?**

In his UN speech on September 12, 2002, President Bush called upon Iraq to “immediately and unconditionally” meet its UN obligations as required by UNSCR 687 and other applicable resolutions.<sup>6</sup> While this is similar to the Clinton Administration’s policy noted above, what has changed is a commitment to solve the problem in the near term. National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice stated “President Bush is committed to confronting the Iraqi regime, which has defied the just demands of the world for a decade [and] history will judge harshly any leader that saw this dark cloud and sat by in complacency or indecision.”<sup>7</sup> President Bush also has said if Iraq takes steps to meet its UN obligations the “Iraqi regime has the opportunity to avoid conflict. These steps would also change the nature of the Iraqi regime itself [but there is] little reason to expect it [and therefore] regime change in Iraq is the only certain means of removing a great danger to our nation.”<sup>8</sup> Thus, the overall US political goal is Iraqi compliance with UN resolutions via regime change, either by a change in behavior or by other means. There are four key Iraqi obligations (under UNSCR 687 and other UNSCRs). They are: (1) the elimination of all nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons (hereafter referred to as weapons of mass destruction or WMD) stockpiles, infrastructure, and developmental programs; and all ballistic missiles (and associated research, development, and support programs) with ranges greater than 150 kilometers,<sup>9</sup> (2) release or account for all Gulf War prisoners, (3) return stolen Kuwaiti property, and (4) account for alleged human rights violations of Iraqi civilians.<sup>10</sup> The implied end-state is a stable, peaceful Iraq that eschews possession of WMD and respects human rights. This end-state

supports other US national security goals and interests (champion human dignity, prevent attacks against the US and its friends, prevent threats from WMD, and open societies and build democracy).<sup>11</sup> An implied goal is to reduce US military presence in the region as soon as possible to free up forces for other needs (e.g., the war on terrorism), reduce stationing costs, and lessen tensions within the Islamic world. The US also wants Iraq to survive as an intact state.

### **What means are being used to contain Iraq?**

After the Gulf War, international consensus was to use power as the means to forestall future Iraqi aggression. Containment was (and is) based on the assumption that Iraq's WMD/missile stockpiles and programs would be eliminated, and without them it could demonstrate its peaceful intentions. Containment would provide incentives for Iraq to eschew future aggression, stop it from reacquiring prohibited weapons, and provide Iraq incentives for changes in behavior (e.g., respecting human rights). The strategy relies upon three instruments of power: diplomacy, economics, and military. Elements of denial and deterrence reinforce the containment.

Diplomacy is conducted through the UN and documented in UNSCRs.<sup>12</sup> An inspection regime (initially the UN Commission on Iraq - UNSCOM, now the UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission - UNMOVIC) was created to verify and monitor WMD and missile stockpile destruction, program termination, and peaceful uses of dual-use technology.<sup>13</sup> A Special Rapporteur of the UN Commission on Human Rights on the Situation of Human Rights in Iraq was "to make a thorough study of the violations of human rights by the Government of Iraq."<sup>14</sup> Both the Clinton and Bush Administrations have referred to Iraqi compliance, but the threat of Saddam Hussein, making the point that it is the Iraqi leadership's behavior that is the problem.<sup>15</sup> This characterization was reinforced by actions such as the oil-for-food program discussed below.

Economically, the 1990 full trade embargo (all imports and exports except for food, medicine, and humanitarian supplies) was continued after the war<sup>16</sup> for two purposes. One was to

deny Iraq the ability to recreate its WMD and missile programs. Second was to pressure the Iraqi government to follow through its promises to meet all its UN obligations. In 1995 the oil-for-food program (which modified the embargo to allow Iraq to pay for food and other humanitarian supplies) was instituted to relieve the suffering of the Iraqi people. UNSCR 1051 established a monitoring system for dual-use exports to Iraq.<sup>17</sup> This embargo remains in effect.

Militarily, the US and others continue to maintain military forces in the region for their deterrent benefit. Limited military action is used to complement the non-military instruments. Northern and southern no-fly zones were established to limit the ability of the Iraqi government to attack and oppress its people. Upon withdrawal of UNSCOM inspectors in 1998 due to Iraqi obstruction, military forces struck Iraqi targets (Operation Desert Fox) to “erode Iraq's military capability and ability to make chemical, biological and nuclear weapons.”<sup>18</sup>

### **Are the political goals being met?**

The policy goals are not being met. President Bush noted repeated violations of 16 resolutions in his UN speech. At least thirty UN Security Council Presidential Statements from 1991 through 1998 addressed Iraqi compliance problems.<sup>19</sup> Iraq is violating all four of its basic obligations and has violated all elements of the containment strategy. Some examples are:

- In 1999, the UN Commission on Human Rights noted that the human rights situation in Iraq is bad and “had few comparisons in the world since the end of the Second World War.”<sup>20</sup>
- In December 2001, the UN Secretary-General reported that Iraq has failed to cooperate in regards to missing Gulf War and Iranian POWs and that no progress had been made on returning Kuwaiti property, including national archives.<sup>21</sup> On 28 October 2002, “as part of a bid to improve its image”, Iraq returned 208 boxes of documents. Kuwait claimed not all the missing archives are included and noted that there are still 600 people unaccounted for.<sup>22</sup>

- In 1998, UNSCOM inspectors left the country when Iraq unilaterally decided to “cease all activities of the Special Commission, including monitoring activities, and that the monitoring teams would not be allowed to conduct any activities.”<sup>23</sup> In response to Iraqi claims that it had disarmed, the UNSCOM Chief stated: “In the absence of full cooperation by Iraq, it must be regrettably reported that the commission is not able to conduct the substantive disarmament work mandated to it by the Security Council.”<sup>24</sup> This work has not resumed.

- Iraq instigated “more than 700 incidents...directed against” aircraft enforcing the UN no-fly zone since 1998.<sup>25</sup>

- The embargo has failed to pressure the Iraqi government to change its behavior and prevent illegal imports. Despite the oil-for-food program, the Iraqi people continue to suffer, since it is in Saddam’s interest to reinforce the perception that sanctions are directed against them. The Iraqi leadership has diverted authorized imports to military and personal purposes. Illegal imports for military uses are being paid for by illegal oil exports.<sup>26</sup> Illegal actions are expected to increase as international support for sanctions wanes due to the perceived suffering of the Iraqi people, a belief that Saddam is contained, and the desire for profits and markets. In August 2002, Russia and Iraq announced they were close to agreement on a \$40 billion economic and trade cooperation agreement.<sup>27</sup> The Iraqi leadership may be playing a waiting game, hoping for relief as support wanes for sanctions.

- Most disturbing is the failure to eliminate WMD and missile stockpiles and programs, which is the key part of the containment strategy. UNSCOM confirmed that prior to 1991, Iraq possessed chemical and biological weapons, was developing nuclear weapons, and had loaded some warheads with biological agents.<sup>28</sup> In 1998, UNSCOM reported that it could not verify that all stockpiles or programs were eliminated.<sup>29</sup> Three recent unclassified assessments of current Iraqi WMD capabilities agree that Iraq possesses and is expanding a chemical and biological

capability, possesses and continues to develop missiles with a range up to 650 miles, and is continuing its nuclear weapons program (with lack of fissile material is the only stumbling block).<sup>30</sup> The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) “made significant strides toward dismantling Iraq’s nuclear weapons program [but] there is substantial evidence that Iraq has reconstituted prohibited programs.”<sup>31</sup>

### **Does Iraq pose a threat if it rearms?**

Thus, continuing the current strategy will result in significant risk of a rearmed Iraq that violates the main political objective. Iraqi flaunting of all its obligations under the UNSCRs indicates it is trying to wait out the international community’s resolve, rather than change its behavior. Iraq is not making much of an effort to prove compliance. An analysis of the threat as the product of capability, vulnerability, and intent ( $T = C \times V \times I$ ) shows:

Iraq has maintained and is expanding its chemical and biological capability. A nuclear capability is possible if fissile material is acquired either through purchase or internal enrichment. Iraq has pursued both options and it may be only a matter of time until one works. Delivery systems for all types of WMD, including proscribed missiles exist.<sup>32</sup>

US allies and interests in the Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean are extremely vulnerable to missile attacks as demonstrated during the Gulf War. Potential Iraqi missiles can threaten a circle that includes Israel, Kuwait, the Suez Canal, the Persian Gulf, and most of Turkey and Saudi Arabia.<sup>33</sup> Anti-missile defenses could only defend selected points. There are indications that Iraq is supporting international terrorism (Palestinian guerrilla and terrorist leader Abu Nidal recently died in Baghdad<sup>34</sup>). Iraq could provide WMD or WMD training to support terrorism against the US homeland and other allies worldwide. September 11, 2001 and the Israeli situation show the vulnerability is high from terrorists bent on martyrdom.



The crucial variable is intent since containment assumes a change away from aggressive behavior over time. There is little to indicate Saddam Hussein has changed his aggressive impulses, despite over a decade of containment. That Iraq continues to pursue a WMD capability in violation of UN mandates seems to indicate that Saddam intends to continue his pre-Gulf War agenda once international resolve wanes. He may still have designs on Iraq and has been quoted as saying that his biggest mistake during the Gulf War was not waiting until he had nuclear weapons before invading Kuwait.<sup>35</sup> Iraq has been supporting the suicide bombers in Israel by paying money their families for their sacrifice.<sup>36</sup> During the Gulf War Iraq used conventional missiles against Israel, set Kuwaiti oil fields on fire, and threatened international terrorism. Iraq used chemical weapons during the war with Iran and against Iraqi Kurds. Kenneth Pollack (Deputy Director for National Security Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations) points out that Saddam's decision-making is often based on incomplete or erroneous information due to fearful and sycophantic aides, deep ignorance of the world outside Iraq, and his own propensities.<sup>37</sup> Saddam has taken great risks but, despite major miscalculations concerning his opponents, he has managed to survive by backing off just enough at the appropriate time. Thus, Saddam's actions coupled with his refusal to try to show compliance with UN obligations, indicates a high probability of intent to continue his goals and methods.

Thus, when the three components of threat are combined, the Iraqi threat is high. As Iraqi WMD capability increases, Saddam Hussein can be expected to use it contrary to US interests.

### **Why a compellence strategy and what means are available?**

The analysis above indicates that after more than a decade of containment, meeting the political goals is no closer to realization. Containment is not keeping Iraq from rearming its WMD programs. There is little indication Saddam Hussein has changed his long-term goals of regional expansion. Eventually he will acquire sufficient capability (specifically nuclear

weapons) to be aggressive again. Despite sanctions, diplomatic activity, and limited military responses, Saddam Hussein continues to defy the UN mandates. Iraq's unwillingness to respond to containment and past history indicate it will not respond to other non-coercive strategies. Therefore, the options are to accept probable Iraqi rearmament and the failure of the UN to enforce its mandates, or change the policy to one of compellence. Compellence offers a long-term solution to the problem by facing it in the short term, in line with the current US policy of confronting Iraq now. Current diplomatic and economic means can be part of a new comprehensive and integrated compellence strategy. The military role can change from deterrence to intervention if necessary.

Diplomatically, the US needs to seek UN reaffirmation of the specific conditions that Iraq must meet (unconditional acceptance of inspectors, and identification and elimination of WMD stockpiles and programs, enforcement of the sanctions regime, response to questions on alleged human rights violations requested by the UN Commissioner on Human Rights, cooperation on accounting for all missing prisoners and Kuwaiti property, etc.), a specific date for appropriate reports on compliance from UNMOVIC and other UN organizations, and authorization for the use of force to effect regime change under Article 41 of the UN Charter in the event of a noncompliance judgment. The compliance date should be within a year. Such a time would allow adequate time for inspectors to gauge Iraqi intentions and for states opposed to war to bring diplomatic pressure on Iraq to comply peacefully. A relatively short time period for compliance would also be appropriate in order to minimize any continued Iraqi rearmament (especially acquisition of fissile material), reduce effects on the Iraqi population, and keep international business interests at bay.

Economically, the embargo should be maintained and tightened. Chantal de Jonge Oudraat (an Associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace) implies that sanctions should

be coupled with a compellence strategy since the historical record indicates they have only worked when proper implementation and a willingness to resort to military action are combined in a comprehensive strategy.<sup>38</sup> A compellence strategy would provide an incentive for those States opposed to war to enforce sanctions in the short term and UNMOVIC would be in a position to better gauge Iraqi and others' compliance.

Militarily, the emphasis changes from deterrence to intervention planning. The US should pursue an international military option, but make it clear that since its vital interests are at stake, it is ready to conduct near-unilateral action.<sup>39</sup> Under compellence Iraq will understand that noncompliance will mean war for the purpose of overthrowing its current regime.

### **What are the moral and ethical implications of using military force?**

An analysis of Just War Theory<sup>40</sup> indicates that the use of force can be justified. Iraq's past aggressive actions have indicated it could pose a threat to world peace if it possesses WMD. National Security Council Resolution 687 called upon Iraq to reaffirm its "peaceful intentions" and noted that possession of WMD violated a number of agreements it had signed prohibiting nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons.<sup>41</sup> An appropriate UNSCR will show Iraq failed to convince the international community it met its obligations. Therefore, it can be argued that the use of force by the UN to ensure Iraq does not possess or acquire WMD can be legitimized as a deterrent to war and is a just cause. The UN Security Council may invoke Article 42 of the UN Charter, which allows for the use of military force when all other means have been exhausted to "maintain or restore international peace and security" (UN Charter). This Article was invoked to authorize the use of force to liberate Kuwait. An appropriate resolution by the US Congress can be viewed as proper US authorization. The good intention is to remove a threat to world peace and to promote human rights. This includes destroying Iraq's WMD capability and/or causing a change in the political leadership that is intent on pursuing aggression. Additionally, there is the

intent of enforcing international law as represented by treaties and UN resolutions. The use of force would be limited to Iraq and what is necessary to ensure Iraq can no longer threaten its neighbors with WMD. It is not necessary to destroy Iraq as a state. The war can be stopped once the objectives are reached. Iraq has had over a decade to show good intentions to meet the UN mandates. All it has shown is obstruction and violations. The military part of a compellence strategy is one of last resort after one more chance. Much further delay can mean acquisition of additional capabilities (e.g., nuclear weapons) that increase the threat to world peace. The overwhelming conventional capability of the US military ensures success can be expected. Coalition partners would make the job easier, but not change the outcome. Iraq has less capability than it had during the Gulf War, while US capability has increased. Even the use of WMD by Iraq should not affect the eventual outcome. US military technical capability allows for unparalleled discrimination of targets and can be used to good effect. The potential exists for Iraqi use of WMD against non-permissible targets, but that potential and increased capability is what the use of military force is trying to prevent. The US military technical capability also allows the proportional use of force to meet objectives. The US would not need to use nuclear weapons against Iraq, although they may be used as a deterrent. Again, the possibility exists of Iraqi use of WMD, but waiting could make Iraqi use inevitable in any event.

The moral aspects also tend to be positive. Although an attack would be technically a violation of Iraq's sovereignty, Iraq agreed (and as a UN member is obligated) to comply with international obligations imposed as a result of its previous aggression. One can argue that the continuing threat to international peace (Iraq's immorality) overrides Iraq's claim to sovereignty and allows force to correct an immoral action. The possibility that an attack may trigger Iraq to use WMD cannot be completely justified. However, the action can be deemed as an attempt to prevent such action and, using the Just War arguments above relating to last resort,

proportionality, and prospect of success, the short-term costs seem to outweigh the long-term possibilities of not acting.

### **Are military operations appropriate to achieve the political goals?**

Conventional military operations are appropriate to meet the political objective of regime change in the event other coercion fails. Military forces can be used to overthrow the current government, occupy the country, destroy WMD and missile stockpiles and programs, and provide security during the transition to a new government that will meet its UN obligations. Intelligence indicates that Iraq appears to be at least a few years away from building a nuclear weapon (if it cannot buy fissile material before it can produce its own, in which case the estimate is Iraq can build a nuclear weapons within a year) and has not totally restocked its other WMD weapons.<sup>42</sup> Continued Iraqi noncompliance, the events of September 11, 2001, and the war on terrorism have met at a point in time where the international and domestic situation may be amenable to collective action on the problem, if managed properly.

Internationally, there is a period of time to build a coalition and gather sufficient military forces to effect regime change before the threat becomes nuclear and other WMD stockpiles grow. An international or regional coalition is desirable, as the US needs bases in the region to support a military action, especially in Kuwait and Turkey, and possibly Saudi Arabia. Tacit support by Jordan and Egypt is desired, at least for air and sea transit rights. Iranian neutrality is desirable to keep open the straits of Hormuz and the Persian Gulf. International oil supplies are high and should withstand a short period of disruption. While the world economy is only slowly growing, it is overall larger than it was in 1991 and should be able to support a war. For the purposes on military action, the US can count on the United Kingdom for full support. Other nations, notably those in the region such as Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Turkey, and Jordan will very likely join a UN effort led by the US and probably will support a near-unilateral

action since they would want to play a role in the post-war reconstruction. Russia, France, China, and Germany may try to avoid war, but if faced with continued Iraqi obstruction, can be counted on to at least abstain from opposing military action.

Militarily, US worldwide commitments and the continuing war on terrorism may limit US capability to some extent, especially in special categories such as special operations forces and low-density capabilities (AWACS, etc.). But this can be handled in the short term by activating National Guard and Reserve forces to replace regular units in less-active areas. The Korean situation is relatively stable as a result of recent North Korean overtures to Japan and South Korea and the fact that it is willing to talk about its no longer secret nuclear weapons program. US commitments to Africa and South America are minimal. Europe is stable and the Balkans is under control. With US troops supporting peacemaking operations in the Balkans, it may be necessary to extend some deployments or ask for increased NATO participation to make more forces available for Iraq. Afghanistan is slowly transitioning to its new government and will require some US and international for security purposes and continue the terrorism hunt. But this should not be excessive. The use of Allies for post-war activities is desirable to free up US forces as soon as possible to continue the war on terrorism and meet unanticipated contingencies. US forces are already in the region enforcing the non-fly zones and have spent the last decade building up supporting infrastructure. The US has pre-positioned equipment for heavy forces in Kuwait and has been rotating units for training and operations on a routine basis.

Domestically, Robert J. Samuelson (contributing editor of Newsweek) argues the US can afford the war costs.<sup>43</sup> He points out that current US military spending is very low compared to previous US wars and the US \$10 trillion GDP can absorb expected costs. While the economy is growing very slowly and a war may slow this down further in the short term, it can be expected to recover, as it did after the 1990 Gulf War. In the wake of September 11, 2001 and the

experience of the Gulf War, Americans can be expected to show support for military action, including call-up of National Guard and Reserve Forces. Despite some initial member opposition, the US Congress passed a resolution to support the use of force once it realized the American public generally supported the Administration's policies.

Iraq can expect no overt state allies, but can expect moral support from various populations and groups who oppose US presence in the region. Iraq may receive support from terrorist groups who see an opportunity to advance their agenda by taking advantage of the situation. Iraq may try to use such groups to counter or erode support of military action.

Unlike the Gulf War, Iraq's limited coastline would not be conducive to marine assault landings, although the Persian Gulf and other littorals provide easy access for movement to adjacent areas. There are some additional aspects of the strategic setting in the US's favor. The Kurdish region in the north is virtually autonomous from Iraqi government control and therefore a relatively large area will not need to be attacked. This area and Kuwait provide two staging areas and avenues of approach to the heart of Iraq. Turkey is a NATO country and that facilitates logistical operations. Additionally, US deployment capability has increased since the Gulf War and the need to move as many heavy divisions is lessened due to the relative decline in Iraqi strength and pre-positioned forces. Therefore, the time to deploy sufficient forces should be eased considerably compared to the Gulf War's six-month buildup.

### **What are the military objectives?**

The Iraqi center of gravity is the Iraqi senior government apparatus. Iraq's autocratic government's power rests on Saddam Hussein's ability to control the Iraqi population. Saddam Hussein does this through the key leaders of the ruling Ba'th party, the internal security apparatus, and the Republican Guard Forces. This represents Clausewitz's "hub of all power and movement, on which everything depends...[and] is the point against which all our energies should be

directed.”<sup>44</sup> For the Iraqi military forces, a WMD capability augments an otherwise relatively weak conventional military capability. Thus, for the US, the overall military objective should be the destruction and/or neutralization of these sources of Iraqi power in order to facilitate occupation of the country to secure conditions for a new government. Implied objectives are to cause as little damage as possible to the Iraqi civilian infrastructure, its oil infrastructure, and limit civilian casualties in order to facilitate the transition to a new government. A short war is also an implied objective to counter probable Iraqi strategies, and release US forces for other contingencies. An additional objective is to protect US interests and Allies around the world from possible terrorist or other asymmetric attacks.

For the US, its true center of gravity is its massive economy and military capability. It is unlikely that Iraq can directly affect this decisively. Saddam Hussein will most likely consider American and world opinion as the key to attacking the US center of gravity. By fighting a protracted war, US public support may wane as costs to the US economy and military (or civilian due to terrorism) casualties increase. As Clausewitz notes, breaking an enemy’s will, rather than “defeating the enemy’s forces...is another way [to conduct] operations that have *direct political repercussions*.”<sup>45</sup> Thus, by attacking US public opinion, Saddam could expect to cause the US to not use its power. For the allies, especially Arab countries, most centers of gravity are their governments. Unlike the US, most of them are parliamentary or authoritarian. But like the US, a protracted war may mean regime instability as their populations identify with the Iraqi people or tire of the war. Such instability could lead to government change (either by force or through parliamentary votes of no-confidence). Such changes could affect US operations and coalition solidarity. Thus, Iraq’s military objective is expected to be to delay defeat as long as possible in order to gain a negotiated settlement and ensure regime survival.



### **Can the military objectives be achieved with current forces?**

The US and its potential allies enjoy overwhelming advantage in military capability, both conventionally and nuclear, although conventional forces are deemed sufficient to meet the military objectives. US weapons are technically superior. The US has sufficient conventional forces to match the Iraqi Army, and other forces and capabilities for special operations. By activating the National Guard and Reserves to temporarily replace active forces (which was not done in 1991), the US can mass a force at least equivalent to the Gulf War, while accepting some risks in other areas. Additionally, National Guard and Reserve forces are needed to reinforce the designated attack forces, as was done in 1991. The stockpiles of some advanced weapons may be limited due to inability to replenish stockpiles if an attack is soon after another operation (e.g., Afghanistan). Since the strategy envisions a period of non-military actions before resorting to force, there should be time to replenish any low stocks. US and any coalition capability should be sufficient to overwhelm any Iraqi defense.

The Iraqi conventional forces, despite some rebuilding, have never recovered from the Gulf War and are considerably weaker than at that time. They remain a conscript force and indications of draft dodging show military service is not popular. Equipment generally is obsolete by modern standards. Maintenance and parts problems (due to the embargo) affect armored vehicle operational rates by as much as 50 percent, and exacerbate a situation where equipment is spread thin. Saddam Hussein has made an effort to increase his loyal paramilitary and militia for internal security purposes. The Iraqi Air Force remains a minor threat. Iraq has rebuilt its air defense system to some extent, has been locating its key C3I infrastructure deep underground, is rebuilding its communications systems using fiber optics, and has dispersed and hidden its WMD capability.<sup>46</sup> The Iraqi leadership probably sees their WMD capability as the means to balance a generally weak conventional capability.

The experience of the Gulf War and the fact that the Iraqi battle experience has eroded over the past decade indicates the conscript Iraqi Army would lose interest in a war as a US attack develops. Specific elements, such as the Iraqi Republican Guard and Saddam Hussein's personal troops can be expected to fight well, at least initially. The regular army and militia can be expected to have less staying power. R. James Woolsey, former CIA director contends that the Iraqi people will welcome US forces.<sup>47</sup> Others see the possibility of a coup once the US attacks.<sup>48</sup> Overall, one can expect initial Iraqi opposition to degenerate into pockets of resistance in the face of US multi-dimensional attacks.

### **Is the military strategy appropriate?**

Iraq will defend conventionally and can be expected to fight a war of attrition, perhaps in its cities<sup>49</sup> to gain time for concessions. It is possible that Iraq will employ chemical and biological weapons, against US and coalition forces and/or against other states' territories to widen the war and encourage coalition breakup. There is also a risk that Iraq may use WMD in a preemptive strike, once it deems war is inevitable, to disrupt coalition plans and utilize terrorist allies. The most dangerous enemy course of action is if Iraq preemptively uses WMD to strike US and coalition forces, and/or other regional states, such as Israel or Turkey, perhaps in conjunction with worldwide terrorist attacks. Preemptive use of WMD would forestall plans to eliminate or secure them quickly at the start of hostilities.

A US course of action<sup>50</sup> could involve five phases: (1) force build-up, (2) center of gravity attacks, (3) continuing attack operations, (4) mopping-up operations, and (4) post-conflict operations. Each phase is planned to be sequential, but the start of each phase may be earlier or later depending on the situation. Phase two may need to start early to react to an Iraqi preemptive attack. Phases two and three may be near simultaneous if phase two has early success. Flexibility

and readiness to react to events need to be the hallmarks of planning. Within each phase, actions may be simultaneous or sequential, depending on logistical and political constraints.

Phase one really begins upon the adoption of a compellence strategy. Some forces are moved to the region to reinforce those already there. Contacts with indigenous or expatriate resistance forces are increased. Once the decision on use of military force is made, US and coalition forces go on high worldwide terrorist alert. US National Guard and Reserve Forces are called up and move to replace designated active units or to deployment sites. Iraq is notified that the US will respond appropriately to any use of WMD and will consider any terrorist attacks on the US to be Iraqi motivated. Initial priority is to get additional forces in place in the region to respond and defend against an Iraqi preemptive attack. This includes additional air assets and ballistic missile defense (BMD) units. BMD units deploy to augment the defenses of likely allied targets (Israel, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Turkey). Simultaneously, as many intelligence assets as possible are employed to locate Iraqi targets, especially command and control facilities, and WMD storage locations. This can include overt and covert actions, including the deployment of special operations teams to move into positions for future operations. Attack forces begin moving to their respective regional deployment areas. Additional air and sea forces deploy to the region. Ground forces concentrate in Kuwait and northern Iraq/Turkey. While the buildup could not be completely hidden, the possibility of a two-front war will cause enemy forces to disperse their efforts. Additionally, during this phase, the US can use any Iraqi provocations in the no-fly zones to begin the disruption of air defense and command and control systems.

Phase two consists of attacks on the key elements of the Iraqi center of gravity. It begins with simultaneous attacks on Iraqi command and control centers, air defenses, and known WMD sites. As they arrive in the region, forces need to be prepared to attack on short notice if there are indications of impending Iraqi preemption. Attacks are across the entire gamut of

capabilities: Air attacks to destroy enemy capabilities, special operations to secure or eliminate key objectives (such as radio stations, command posts, missile launching sites, etc.), and more conventional ground force attacks (e.g., heliborne) to secure oil fields and other larger facilities (such as WMD storage locations). Targets include capturing or eliminating senior government personnel, security apparatus leadership and the Republican Guards command structure. The objective here is to eliminate or neutralize the Iraqi leadership's control over Iraq, especially its military and para-military forces, secure or eliminate its WMD capability, and secure and protect key infrastructure sites. Consideration of using indigenous or expatriate dissident forces should be made. The main forces here will be US with some close Ally participation.

Phase three begins once Phase two is underway and some key objectives have been secured or neutralized. Main ground forces attack to cut off and destroy Republican Guard and other Iraqi forces, and link up with other allied forces inserted ahead of them. Airmobile and other fast moving forces block Iraqi forces from retreating into Baghdad for a final defensive stand. If possible, Baghdad (or key points) is secured via a *coup-de-main*. Allied forces resist from getting involved in a war of attrition. Intelligence, Special Forces, and air assets continue to concentrate on finding enemy leadership, block potential escape routes, and securing WMD capabilities. US forces spearhead this phase. Allied forces are used to the extent of their ability. The deployment of Arab Allies along the Iranian and other sensitive borders may preclude misunderstandings of US intent.

Phase four begins with the commencement of mopping up operations. Cut-off Iraqi forces are allowed to surrender. Those that do not are surrounded and put under siege. Extensive information operations should be used to obtain surrenders. Decisions may be needed to continue to attack final holdouts to secure Baghdad and other key areas. Emphasis is placed on allowing civilians safe passage from contested areas and damage is to be limited to the extent

possible. During this phase, distribution points for food and other necessities, and medical facilities are set up and begin operations to relieve the suffering of the Iraqi people. Allied forces should be seen as key players during this phase.

Phase five starts with the start of the government transition plan. Planning for this needs to be accomplished prior to the start of hostilities, but exact operations will depend on the final situation in Iraq. Positive reception by the Iraqi people would mean an easier nation-building effort, as opposed to a situation where Iraqi forces and people are hostile and bent on martyrdom. Emphasis is on installing a new Iraqi government as soon as possible and removing military forces – especially western ones. Arab or other Moslem forces should be used to the maximum extent possible for post-conflict security roles until a functioning Iraq is achieved.

The above strategic concept is designed to maximize US and coalition capability to achieve the political goals in the shortest time. It is based on the need to be ready for Iraqi preemption, forestall a protracted conflict, limit damage to infrastructure for post-conflict recovery, and establish conditions for the rebuilding of Iraq and the creation of a new government.

### **Does the likely outcome of military operations satisfy the political goals?**

The likely outcome is a coalition victory and the elimination of the Iraqi regime, while not destroying Iraq's ability to recover in a relatively short time. If executed quickly with sufficient force, the Iraqi government and military should be unable to respond in a manner that precludes defeat. The test of the strategy will in the short term be the removal of the current Iraqi government, and in the long term will be the establishment conditions for a new, more peaceful government. Note that the actual establishment of the government may (and should) not be a military responsibility. There are two serious risks. One is that the war becomes protracted or WMD is used effectively, and international and domestic pressure grows to negotiate a settlement short of regime change. The second risk is Saddam Hussein and/or key officials escape to set up

a government-in-exile that advocates a guerrilla or terrorist war against the occupiers and new government. The key will be good intelligence and well executed operations. Likely escape routes should be secured and agreements made with neighboring states to close the borders and apprehend specific fugitives. Success of the nation building and the new government will be aided by protecting its potential source of income – the oil fields.

### **Conclusion**

The strategy of containment is failing in Iraq. There is no indication that Saddam Hussein intends to change his future behavior. He has used the past decade to obstruct UN efforts and rebuild his WMD capability. Unless the US is willing to change its political goals and allow a WMD-capable Iraq to exist, a change in strategy is needed. A compellence strategy, using the available instruments of power and backed up with military force should be implemented to force regime change. There will be risks associated with going to war against Iraq, including possible use of WMD against US forces and regional allies; possible terrorist attacks worldwide, and a chance of a protracted war or guerrilla campaign. However, the risk of not acting is the probability that a rearmed Iraq will resume its aggressive tendencies once it acquires nuclear weapons. The US and its Allies cannot risk having Saddam Hussein having such a capability in an area that is vital to US, European, and other Allied interests. To quote Colin Powell: “We can no longer turn away from this danger. We have to disarm Iraq.”<sup>51</sup>

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